

Senator Gary Siplin's District 19 Newsletter



December 1, 2011
Issue No. 2



Dear Neighbors & Friends:

Thank you for allowing me to serve you in the Florida Senate. As the final days of my term in office come to an end, I want to utilize this newsletter to keep you abreast of the things that are occurring, both in Tallahassee and at home, that are of greatest importance to you.

~~~ God Bless, Gary

Senate on the Street!

I initiated for the first time this year "Senate on the Street," which allows residents of Florida's 19th Senatorial District to meet with me one-on-one and discuss with any issue, concern or problem involving the state government in the neighborhoods where they live.

My inaugural "Senate on the Street" was held at Winn-Dixie in Apopka on Veterans' Day, and several constituents stopped by with questions and concerns that my staff and I were able to assist them with.

The next "Senate on the Street" will come at the conclusion of the first two weeks of the 2012 Legislative Session. Be sure to come by and make your concerns known, or simply to say "Hi."

WHAT: "Senate on the Street" with State Sen. Gary Siplin

WHEN: 11am-1pm, Saturday, January 28, 2012

WHERE: Bravo Supermarket, 999 N. Semoran Blvd., Orlando

Senator Siplin's Upcoming Events

**Central Florida Legislative
Delegation Meeting**

12.01.2011

UCF Fairwinds Alumni Center

Senate on the Street

12.03.2011

Town Hall, Town of Eatonville

**Interim Committee Meetings of
the Florida Senate**

12.05 thru 12.08.11

Tallahassee, FL

**Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka
35th Annual Christmas Parade**

12.10.2011

Apopka, FL

Worship at Sanctuary of Praise

12.11.2011

Orlando, FL

**Florida Innocence Commission
Meeting**

12.12 thru 12.13.11

Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando

SunRail MBE/DBE Forum

12.16.2011

Amway Center, Fairwinds Tower

Annual Christmas Toy Giveaway

12.17.2011

Jones High School

Change Your Life Workshop

12.31.2011

Harvest Baptist Church, Orlando

Progress for Lake Apopka

Fifty years of pesticide and fertilizer run-off to Lake Apopka has resulted in it becoming the state's most contaminated large lake. The people who were exposed to those same pesticides for years have yet to see any concentrated effort to address the resulting health concerns. That's why during the 2011 Legislative Session, after hearing of the ongoing environmental and health issues in the Lake Apopka community, I worked to obtain a \$500,000 appropriation to address the special issues that have evolved from the pesticide exposure years ago. Although, the funding was vetoed by Governor Scott, I will continue fighting to have those dollars re-appropriated during the 2012 Legislative Session.

Since then, I have been working tirelessly with various stakeholders and the Lake Apopka community to ensure that all secondary effects of the wrong committed years ago, are corrected, including waste disposal, chronic illness, animal mortality, transportation issues, and access to healthy foods. This also includes working to prevent further continuation or expansion of toxicity in the Lake Apopka area.

I am proud that as a result of our efforts, the conversion of the Vista Landfill from a Class 3 to a Class 1 facility has been halted. I vow to continue these efforts until the Lake Apopka community is made whole again.

What's New in District 19?

Committee Assignments

Agriculture, Chair

Governmental Oversight & Accountability,
Vice Chair

Higher Education, Vice Chair

Budget

Budget Subcommittee on Education
PreK-12 Appropriations

Budget Subcommittee on Higher Education
Appropriations

Reapportionment

Regulated Industries

Rules

Joint Legislative Budget Commission

On Thanksgiving, I was honored to host my 1st Thanksgiving Dinner for Seniors at Soiree Event Center in Pine Hills. We were able to feed hundreds of Senior citizens and Veterans, as well as to provide them with blankets to keep them warm this coming Winter.

On November 2, I asked Gov. Rick Scott to place an administrative freeze on all SunRail contracts that have yet to be awarded due to the lack of diversity in contracts awarded thus far. In an effort to resolve this issue, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has asked me to co-sponsor a Minority Business Enterprise SunRail Forum, which will be held on Friday, December 16th at the Fairwinds Tower of the New Amway Center. My hope is that this event will mark the initiation of increased opportunities for minority businesses in Central Florida on the SunRail project.

On December 17th, my 10th Annual Christmas Toy Giveaway will take place at Jones High School. We were pleased this year to have over 4,000 children sign up for toys, and are excited at the prospect of being able to bless so many families this year.

Bills Sponsored by Sen. Siplin

SB 98 Education: Authorizing district school boards to adopt resolutions that allow prayers of invocation or benediction at secondary school events

SB 102 Termination of Gas or Electric Service: Prohibiting the termination of a senior citizen's or low-income family's utilities during periods of extreme temperatures

SR 300 Merry Christmas/Official Greeting for December 25: Recognizing "Merry Christmas" as the State of Florida's official greeting for December 25

SB 100 Unclaimed Deposits Held by Utilities: Requiring that any unclaimed deposits held by a utility be deposited annually to supplement the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

SB 106 Postsecondary Student Fees: Providing an exemption from payment of non-resident tuition at a state university or Florida College System institution for undocumented students who meet specified requirements

SB 592 Tax Exemptions/Fresh Fruit & Vegetable

Packinghouses: Providing a tax exemption for electricity used by fresh fruit and vegetable packinghouses

SB 102 Employment Practices: Prohibiting the use of a job applicant's personal credit history as a hiring criterion

SB 200 Limited English Proficient Students: Authorizing school districts to administer student achievement tests in a student's primary language if the student is severely limited in English proficiency

SB 644 Sealing & Destroying Certain Criminal Records:

Creating a procedure for a person to seek a court order to seal an arrest record if the person is deemed factually innocent of any charge arising out of the arrest

SB 222 Domestic Corporations: Providing for conversion of limited agricultural associations into domestic corporations

SB 852 Healthy Foods Retail Act:

Directing the Department of Agriculture to establish a financing program to help fund projects that increase access to fresh fruits & vegetables in underserved areas

*From My Family
Staff, and I:*



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